



December 30, 2005

Statewide Planning Office – Division of Program Development
3132 Channel Drive, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801-7898

RE: Comments on Draft FY2006-2008 Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

I am very disappointed with the proposed Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) which is a drastic departure from the STIP approved last January. I am outraged at the State's proposed Draft FY2006-2008 STIP which has completely cut **over two thirds** of the projects previously scheduled for the FY 2006 and beyond. Another 70 projects have been delayed for at least four years. Funds for the Community Transportation Program were **slashed by 75%** for the next three years. The Community Transportation Program is used to pay for evacuation, sanitation, and community roads in rural areas. For example:

- Over \$4 million was cut for dust control and community roads in Barrow;
- Construction of the Chignik area inter-village road system was delayed for four years;
- \$3.6 million was cut for the False Pass boardwalk extension;
- Ferry terminal improvements for Angoon were delayed for four years;
- \$250,000 for Aniak barge access was cut;
- \$380,000 for Venetie sanitation roads was cut;
- A replacement for the M/V LeConte, which currently serves Hoonah, Pelican, Angoon, Tenakee, and Kake;
- The list goes on.

I have read through the projects summary listing cuts and delays to projects throughout Alaska and I am appalled at this proposal which will hurt so many Alaska communities and villages.

I strongly urge you to address the critical needs of this state and use this opportunity to abandon the mega-projects like the Knik Arm Bridge in Anchorage, the Gravina Bridge in Juneau, and the Bradfield Canal Road near Wrangell and instead put the money where it is most needed. The Governor Murkowski/State of Alaska plan is absurd and ignores the long-awaited improvements that are critical for Alaska's rural communities.

As a civil engineer who has lived in and traveled throughout this state for over 12 years, I feel I have a good understanding of the transportation needs of many Alaska communities. I know that hundreds of people have worked hard to identify the critical transportation and related needs in this state and have followed the proper process to

obtain prioritization and funding for these projects, and I ask you to please follow their recommendations which are clearly laid out in the STIP approved last January. It is critical, in this time of increasing cuts in available federal dollars, to spend our transportation funds wisely.

Thank you for taking the time to review my comments and concerns. I hope that you will address this problem and take the steps necessary to do what is right for the people of Alaska. Feel free to call me at (907) 245-1967 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Christopher M. Riggio, PE
Civil/Environmental Engineer
Small Business Owner
Persian Gulf War Veteran, Captain, USAF (separated 1993)
Adjunct Professor, University of Alaska, Anchorage

Cc: State Representative Ethan Berkowitz
State Senator Hollis French